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**From:** Mason, Steve  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 06, 2013 7:58 AM  
**To:** Smith, Monica  
**Subject:** RE: Dallas morning news article from the EO listening session held in Texas City

Would you like to write a small blurb for the LEPC newsletter, focusing more on any discussion about LEPCs from the listening session...

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**From:** Smith, Monica  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 06, 2013 7:31 AM  
**To:** Edlund, Carl; Phillips, Pam; Broyles, Ragan; Petersen, Chris; McQuiddy, David; Ruhl, Christopher; Webster, Susan; Mason, Steve; Thompson, Steve; Tate, Samuel; Jennings, Kim; Belke, Jim; Brooks, Becky; Stanislaus, Mathy; Bergman, Shawna; Stanton, Larry; Gray, David  
**Subject:** Dallas morning news article from the EO listening session held in Texas City

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/west-explosion/headlines/20131106-speakers-urge-tougher-chemical-safety-rules-in-wake-of-west-blast.ece>

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November 06, 2013 01:03 AM CST November 06, 2013 01:04 AM CST Speakers urge tougher chemical safety rules in wake of West blast

## Speakers urge tougher chemical safety rules in wake of West blast



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G.J. McCarthy/Staff Photographer

Smoke still rose the day after a fertilizer plant blew up in West, killing 15 and devastating nearby homes.

By DANIEL LATHROP

DANIEL LATHROP The Dallas Morning News

Staff Writer

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Published: 06 November 2013 01:03 AM

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TEXAS CITY — Environmental activists and labor unions called Tuesday for tougher regulation of chemicals at a public hearing where industry representatives remained largely silent, watching and waiting.

Only a single speaker from a chemical company addressed the room during the first in a series of national “listening sessions” planned as federal agencies seek input for policies upgrading regulations and data collection involving chemical safety and chemical security.

“The addition of yet another layer of regulation will do nothing to improve safety,” Edwin Cannon, a safety manager at Texas oil services firm Baker Hughes Inc., told the gathering.

His firm uses ammonium nitrate for explosives, already more heavily regulated than dangerous chemicals used for farming. “Our safety record in the industry is extremely safe,” he later told *The Dallas Morning News*.

But President Barack Obama’s executive order directing agencies to begin the first major national chemical safety upgrade in a decade was largely prompted by the April disaster in the small farming town of West. There, ammonium nitrate used for fertilizer exploded, killing 15 people and injuring hundreds.

Environmentalists and unions at the meeting called on agencies to use existing laws to:

Create a federal mandate that companies use safer chemicals or chemical processes where they’re available.

Restore online access to information about chemical hazards that, since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, has been limited.

Increase the frequency of environmental and safety inspections.

“If we can somehow find a way to get our federal government and our state government to enforce the present regulations and policies that are in place, with the Clean Air Act, at this particular time we can make some great strides,” said Hilton Kelley, founder of the Port Arthur-based environmental justice group Community In-power & Development Association Inc.

“It’s time that we do more to protect the citizens in these communities,” he said.

Government representatives appeared cautious.

“Don’t let the enemy of progress be perfection,” said Assistant EPA Administrator Marthy Stanislaus, apparently directing his comments at the labor and environmental representatives in the audience.

The significance of holding the first hearing in this Gulf Coast city didn’t pass unnoticed: Almost 600 people died here in 1947 when a ship carrying ammonium nitrate blew up while in port.

Near the end of the day, an EPA official questioned Greenpeace policy analyst John Deans, representing the national Coalition to Prevent Chemical Disasters.

The official asked if the group had any proposals for chemical safety regulation that would encourage industry to adopt safer techniques without specifically requiring them to do so.

“That’s the kind of thing where we can go back to Washington ... and actually produce something that is going to be allowed to stand,” said Larry Stanton, director of emergency management.

Proposals for reforms are due on the president’s desk in April.

Follow Daniel Lathrop on Twitter at @lathropd.

**IN THE KNOW: How close does danger lurk?**

Texans can now learn whether they live near one of 110 facilities in the state that store more than 10,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate. Created by the state fire marshal's office, the "Ammonium Nitrate in Texas" Web application went live Tuesday, state officials said. By entering a ZIP code into a website, residents can find out whether there is a facility storing more than 10,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate within their ZIP code. The website does not provide a specific address of the facility, only an icon on a map showing the general vicinity. Residents with questions will be directed to the local fire department.

The site is at <https://apps.tdi.state.tx.us/ammoniumnitrate/StartAction.do>

*Dave Tarrant*